

REFLECTION GUIDE

ACTS 16:1-40 | HOW JESUS CHANGES LIVES

KEY TERMS

Timothy - Timothy was from Lystra in Asia Minor and was born to a Jewish mother and Gentile father. His mother Eunice and grandmother Lois were both Christians (2 Timothy 1:5) and prepared him for a life of faith (2 Tim 3:15). Timothy joined Paul when Paul travelled to his hometown and went on to become a close companion of Paul, a co-sender of several of Paul's NT letters, and the recipient of two letters from Paul.

Philippi - Philippi was a prominent Roman city in Macedonia. In Philippi, Paul meets Lydia, a practicing Jewish woman, praying by the river on the Sabbath. This scene suggests that there is likely not enough Jewish men in Philippi to form a synagogue, but, after trusting in Jesus, Lydia and her household form the first church in all of Europe.

DID YOU KNOW?

Paul appeals to his Roman citizenship in verse 37 because it was against Roman law to beat or arrest a Roman citizen without a trial, and Paul and his companions had just experienced both without any trial.

BACKGROUND

On his second missionary journey, Paul meets a Christian named Timothy (v. 1), who would become one of Paul's closest companions. Timothy was Jewish but he was not circumcised, and though circumcision is not necessary for salvation (see Acts 15:1-35), Paul chooses to have Timothy circumcised (v. 3). This decision is likely because Timothy would have been viewed as an apostate Jew without being circumcised (Bruce, *Acts*, 1990), and therefore Timothy's presence would have hindered the mission (see Galatians 2:3-5 where Paul doesn't circumcise Titus, who was a Gentile). Paul, Timothy, and others continue the journey, being prevented by the Holy Spirit to go to Asia, and instead being led by a vision to Europe (vv. 6-10). At this point in Acts, the narrative shifts to the third person (*we made a...voyage*), suggesting that Luke has joined Paul and his companions on the journey and is now recording a first-hand account of the events.

In Macedonia, the group enters Philippi and meets a devout Jewish woman named Lydia who becomes the first known Christian convert in Europe (v. 11-15). Lydia is also the head of her household, likely because her husband had died or she was a single woman with financial means, possibly divorced, and her household is baptized as well, establishing the first church in Europe. Following the conversion of Lydia and her household, Paul and Silas cast out a demon from a fortune telling slave girl and are beaten and arrested after her owners turn the crowds against Paul and Silas (vv. 16-24). While singing and praying in prison, an earthquake frees Paul and Silas, but instead of fleeing, they stay in the prison. Recognizing that something miraculous has taken place, the jailer asks Paul and Silas what he needs to do to be saved, and the jailer and his household trust Jesus and are baptized (vv. 25-34).

GOING DEEPER

Read 2 Timothy 1:5, 2:2, and 3:14. What pattern do you see? What does this pattern teach us about the importance of mentoring others in the faith? What does it teach about the importance of family?



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

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Reflection questions are available when Redemption Groups are meeting. Groups will begin meeting again in June. To sign up for a group, go to redemptionokc.com/groups or email Chace at chace.ifland@redemptionokc.com.